

Mark Zaid
47 South Lake Ave., #4
Albany, N.Y. 12203

9/21/89

Dear Mark,

I did not intend a slap in the face. I was aiming at the head.

As I think you realize, I owed you honesty. And as you may have to get to my age to understand (remember, I've been your age) I hate seeing bright and promising young people with attitudes and concepts that can be hurtful to them and inhibit the good they can do for others and for themselves. I also feared that if you continue with the attitudes I perceived, as a lawyer you could get in serious trouble.

Ask Dave Wrone if you'd like, but remember, you'll be asking quite a bit of him. Aside from his professorial duties and obligations he is into many, many other things. He has very little time not already obligated.

Sure you can come and I've filed your thesis with my notes on it and will be glad to discuss them with you.

I'll be glad to try and help with your new project, too.

But remember, I've cautioned you about the irresponsible writings and by now, if you've read what you should have read, you should be in a better position to make intelligent and mature judgements.

We all make errors of judgement, regardless of our ages and backgrounds. I am also of the Vietnam generation, by the way. I was on the earliest protests, like of the authors and editors, and was a sponsor of some of the earliest marches. When I was a bit younger than you I was a conscientious objector to compulsory military training in colleges. The VN generation did not invent that, either. I've been involved in things I doubt you'd want to experience, had a law passed against me and a grand jury convoked to "get" me and survived all of that and much more. I don't think your generation had any perspective very different from mine and for the most part no personal experiences and problems to compare. I doubt you are more distrustful of the government than I and doubt you have nearly as much reason to be. Perhaps you are beginning to get the idea that I'm addressing a rush to judgement as well as a self-justification. In the sense of your letter there is no generational gap in my comments on your thesis. The difference in physical age is, of course, great, but that does not mean in every instance what you suggest in this instance in any event.

In addition to what I think I've already said about Texas law as of 1963 and how to get access, in my first book I made a point of saying that the only applicable law was Texas law, there having been no other crime when JFK was assassinated, and that it should have been respected by the federal government. You'll find that a New York jurist, I think his name was Fein but I'm not sure, wrote an attack on me and other, me on this point, for Commentary. Arnold Fein? I think I have the piece. But you can get it and perhaps other thing like letters, from Commentary, perhaps.

You have an excellent attitude in saying that you appreciate criticisms and can grow from them. But remember, plants and trees that grow, grow from roots. ~~Plants~~ Be sure the root is sound, healthy. Please think about my personal comments and if you agree, you'll have a better root, from which all grows.

Best wishes,


Arnold Weisberg